

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 and 18-24 remain pending in the application, with Claims 1, 10, 13 and 18-21 being independent. Claims 1, 10, 13, 20 and 21 have been amended herein.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 18 and 19 are allowed and Claims 5 and 14¹ have been indicated as reciting allowable subject matter. Claims 18 and 19 have not been amended herein, thus remaining in condition for allowance. In addition, because independent Claims 1 and 13, on which Claims 5 and 14 directly or indirectly depend, are believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed below, these dependent claims will not be rewritten in independent form at this time.

Claims 1-3, 10, 15, 16 and 20-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,231,156 (Ono). Claims 4, 6, 7 and 11-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Ono in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,382,764 (Shimoda). Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Ono in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,583,547 (Gast et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

¹ Although Claim 14 is not listed in paragraph 33 as an objected to claim reciting allowable subject matter, this was confirmed with the Examiner in a telephone conversation on March 9, 2006.

The ink jet printing apparatus in Ono includes a carriage 2 on which several printing heads for ejecting color inks 1k to 1y and a printing head 1s for ejecting a processing liquid are mounted. As shown in Figure 1A, the printing heads are aligned such that their nozzle arrays are parallel to one another. Ono also notes that in addition to being formed in separate heads as shown in Figure 4, the printing heads can be formed integrally, but there would still be a distance between ejecting portions of the respective inks. That is, even if formed integrally, the separate color inks and processing liquid would be parallel in side-by-side arrays.

Accordingly, Ono does not disclose or suggest at least nozzles of a print head being divided into a plurality of blocks, with the nozzles being divided into the plurality of blocks forming a nozzle array, and the plurality of blocks being divided in a length direction of the nozzle array, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 10-13 and 20. Nor does Ono disclose or suggest at least predetermined nozzles being a portion of a plurality of nozzles forming a nozzle array, with the predetermined nozzles being positioned anywhere in a length direction of the nozzle array, as is recited in independent Claim 21.

Thus, Ono fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

The structure of the printheads in Shimoda and Gast et al. have also been reviewed, but are not believed to remedy the deficiencies of Ono noted above with respect to the independent claims.

Thus, independent Claims 1, 10, 13, 20 and 21 are patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §§ 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

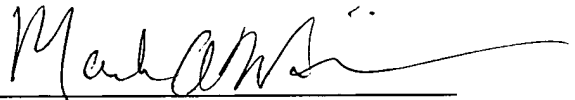
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that, in addition to Claims 18 and 19, the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 10, 13, 20 and 21. Dependent Claims 2-9, 11, 12, 14-16 and 22-24 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. This Amendment was not earlier presented because Applicants earnestly believed that the prior Amendment placed the subject application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark A. Williamson', written over a horizontal line.

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